

# Community, Counseling and Correctional Services, Inc.

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June 21, 2016

## Sentencing Commission Members Counsel of State Government Officials

Allow me to introduce myself: My name is Alex Vukovich and I have been with the WATCH program since it opened in 2002. I have also been the program administrator for the past 10 years.

I have a serious concern about the possible cutting of the length of stay for the WATCH program. As you know the WATCH program is 6 months in duration and is a modified therapeutic community. The modified therapeutic community is based on the belief that chronic addiction comes with an acquired lifestyle and that recovery requires a holistic approach that challenges deeply the ingrained behaviors and teaches healthy alternatives. The length of time to accomplish changes is important. The clientele commonality is that they all are convicted DUI felons and have a set sentence which cannot be changed. Most have been through treatment and continued to use despite legal consequences.

The Department of Justice in 1995 endorsed long term treatment for the incarcerated criminal. The DOJ acknowledged the least expensive and most cost effective treatment was a long term therapeutic community approach while they were incarcerated. That sentiment has not changed considering the DOJ funded a research project by the University of Texas San Antonio in 2012. This was an intensive two-year project that examined process and outcome evaluations of three states-sponsored alcohol programs within Montana, Ohio and Texas. This study involved program design, quality of treatment and delivery and program effectiveness. The study concluded that although this study examined three programs, only Montana's WATCH program was found to be near ideal in design and performance. The research team recommended the WATCH program be replicated nationwide.

A program at least 6 months long allows the client to challenge the addiction as well as change the cognitive process. The WATCH program strives to be 'the' Modified Therapeutic Model. The program has treated over 3000 clients in the 14 years it has been open and has saved the DOC around 4.7 million dollars a year because of approach and length of program as well as being compared to the cost of a 13 month incarceration at MSP. It is commonly agreed that the modified treatment program should be intense and offer restorative tools to be successful when discharged. The 'peer helping peer' in modified TC works and works well at the six month level. The DOJ in 1995 also stated a 12 – 18 month residential treatment should be recommended.

Bismarck Transition Center  
Kevin Arthaud, Adm.  
2001 Lee Avenue  
Bismarck, ND 58504  
701-222-3440 Fax 701-222-3599

Butte Pre-Release Center  
Women's Transitional Center  
Jay Grant, Adm.  
58-68 W. Broadway  
Butte, MT 59701  
BPRC 406-782-2316  
WTC 406-782-6446 Fax 406-723-1170

Connections Corrections Program  
Dave Boyd, Adm.  
111 W. Broadway  
Butte, MT 59701  
406-782-6626 Fax 406-782-6676

Discovery House  
Carole Kovacich, Adm.  
800 S. Main Street  
Anaconda, MT 59711  
406-563-3842 Fax 406-563-2451

Gallatin Re-Entry Facility  
Melissa Kelly, Adm.  
675 S. 16 Street  
Bozeman, MT 59715  
406-994-0300 Fax 406-994-0306

Martin Hall Juvenile Detention Facility  
Robert Palmquist, Adm.  
P.O. Box 670  
Medical Lake, WA 99022  
509-299-7733 Fax 509-299-1447

Nexus Program  
Marcie Conmy Adm.  
P.O. Box 1200  
Lewistown, MT 59457  
406-535-6660 Fax 406-535-6665

RYO Correctional Facility  
Travis Hettick, Adm.  
360 Galen Street  
Deer Lodge, MT 59722  
406-693-9975 Fax 406-693-9988

START Program  
George Strutzel, Adm.  
801 MT Hwy 48  
Anaconda, MT 59711  
406-563-7002 Fax 406-563-5069

WATCH Program  
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Warm Springs, MT 59756  
406-693-2272 Fax 406-693-2276

WATCH East  
Deb Dion, Adm.  
700 Little Street  
Glendive, MT 59330  
406-377-6001 Fax 406-377-6004

To ensure the convicted DUI felon gets treatment the WATCH program has been an incentive to stay out of prison and this works. The cost of treatment vs prison time is evident. The program is unique; it offers treatment for those who were driving under the influence. The separation of this population can be promising in reducing the prison population. The recidivism rate for the WATCH program is remarkable with 78% of the WATCH clients not coming back into the prison system/DOC.

The success of the modified therapeutic community relies on the structure and utilizes evidence based material. This program has taken great care in designing and maintaining the structural integrity of treatment delivery. The 6 month model allows for change - it ensures the treatment families work together for one goal – Sobriety.

Respectfully,

Alex Vukovich  
WATCH Administrator